

**Senior Service College Fellowship
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**MILITARY COOPERATION
FRAMEWORKS: EFFECTIVE
MODELS TO ADDRESS
TRANSNATIONAL SECURITY
CHALLENGES OF THE
ASIA-PACIFIC REGION**

BY

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ABSTRACT

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MILITARY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS: EFFECTIVE MODELS TO ADDRESS TRANSNATIONAL SECURITY CHALLENGES OF THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION

I. Introduction

Current issues such as terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, impacts of climate change, and the ever-growing competition for valuable natural resources have resulted in a new set of security challenges for the world. As an integral part of the effort to create enduring comprehensive security solutions to these challenges, there are numerous regional United States military “soft power” frameworks designed to promote cooperation and security capacity building. The Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies (APCSS) and the Multinational Planning Augmentation Team (MPAT) are two such frameworks within the Asia Pacific region. The following is a detailed analysis of these unique programs, which documents their utility in achieving deeper cooperation and security capacity building in the Asia-Pacific region, and identifies common organizing principles that can be applied across new and emerging engagement strategies for addressing transnational security challenges throughout this diverse region.

The Call for Renewed Engagement

The current United States security strategy places a renewed emphasis on the importance of American leadership and a new era of engagement across the Asia-Pacific region.¹ In November of 2009, President Barack Obama presented a comprehensive Asia-Pacific security strategy during remarks he made during his first regional visit to Suntory Hall, Japan. The comprehensive strategy included a plan to

combat the full spectrum of security challenges within the culturally diverse and economically significant region. His remarks emphasized the importance of bilateral alliances with Japan, South Korea, Australia, Thailand, and the Philippines, and spoke to a new effort to create enhanced multilateral partnerships in order to address common challenges. President Obama highlighted "equality and mutual understanding,"² as a primary strength of our bilateral alliances, and stressed the importance of these principles for the United States' approach to establishing enduring multilateral partnerships throughout the Asia-Pacific Region.

Asia-Pacific's Transnational Security Challenge

The president's call for enhanced multilateral partnerships reflects a heightened focus on transnational security challenges existing within the region. Transnational threats to national security are defined as nonmilitary threats that cross borders and threaten the political and social integrity of a nation or the health of that nation's inhabitants.³ The September 11, 2001 terrorist attack on the United States exemplified such a threat, and redefined our nation's security priorities by recognizing that cross-border actions of non-state actors are a security threat on par with traditional state-on-state security concerns.

Specific transnational security threats within the Asia Pacific region were identified by Kurt Campbell, Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, during his 2010 testimony to congress. Campbell stated:

"Over the course of the next few decades climate change, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and widespread poverty will pose the most

significant challenges to the United States and the rest of the region. These challenges are and will continue to be most acute in East Asia. This situation not only suggests a need for the United States to play a leading role in addressing these challenges, but it also indicates a need to strengthen and broaden alliances, build new partnerships, and enhance capacity of multilateral organizations in the region.”⁴

These statements were corroborated in a 2009-2010 survey of over two hundred Asia Pacific Center for Security Studies (APCSS) alumni (mid-level security practitioners), which revealed the regional security priorities through the eyes of those who live in the region. Within all four Asia-Pacific sub regions (Northeast Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, Pacific Island Nations), transnational security ranked first or second with specific areas of highest concern being terrorism, climate change and the spread of infectious disease.⁵

By their very nature, transnational threats require cooperation between multiple states. Secretary of State Campbell’s statement also emphasizes the need to exploit existing cooperative mechanisms and quickly develop new engagement strategies to adequately enhance cooperation between the nations of the Asia-Pacific region to combat emerging transnational security challenges.

Defining a Smart Power Strategy

Smart power strategies, a concept introduced by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton during her confirmation hearings before congress,⁶ and further developed in the Department of State’s Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review published in

November of 2010, refer to a unique combination of diplomacy and military capability.⁷

Smart power is defined by Joseph Nye as the “the combination of the hard power of coercion and payment with the soft power of persuasion and attraction.”⁸ Nye goes on to say that it is critically important to combine both hard and soft power mechanisms to develop a successful security strategy for the 21st century. The principles of engagement for the Asia-Pacific region as outlined by Kurt Campbell emphasize the need for increased cooperation and communication on both a bilateral and multilateral front. These principles focus on developing soft power strategies to complement the existing forwardly deployed military presence, or hard power, within the region.⁹ Examples of soft power strategies can be found within the numerous United States military frameworks designed to promote cooperation and security capacity building.

Military Cooperation Soft Power Frameworks

Inaccurately categorized by many as purely “hard power”, the military actually has programs and frameworks that are uniquely suited to build capacity through an emphasis on cooperation. Understanding these existing military soft power programs provides insight into the potential for new engagement strategies as envisioned by the current national security strategy for the region.

The development of the military’s soft power frameworks became evident in the late 1990’s with the 1997 National Security Strategy (NSS), which highlighted the need to focus on transnational threats, through a detailed description of the threats facing the United States in the 21st century.¹⁰ The 1997 NSS advanced the idea that “the U.S. military plays an essential role in building coalitions and shaping the international environment in ways that protect and promote U.S. interests.”¹¹ During this same

period, the military was expanding its ability to increase the security capacity of our partner nations through programs that emphasized cooperation. Two military programs established during that time are the Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies (APCSS), one of five regional strategic level security institutions organized by the Department of Defense, and the Multinational Planning Augmentation Team (MPAT), a United States Pacific Command (USPACOM) program designed to increase interoperability amongst our multinational partners within the Asia-Pacific region. These two programs stand out in their unique ability to create security capacity through an increased emphasis on cooperation. Detailed review of these programs to garner the lessons applicable to establishing transnational security cooperation is valuable considering the renewed emphasis by the nation's leaders on creating "spheres of cooperation"¹² focused on increasing security capacity across the Asia-Pacific region.

II. Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies

The United States Department of Defense sponsors five regional centers for security studies. During the early 1990's, Secretary of Defense William Perry envisioned a forum to inform policy development throughout the various regions of the world. The Department of Defense stated that regional centers would "serve as institutions for bilateral and multilateral communication, and military and civilian exchanges, providing a face-to-face, constructive environment for militaries and defense establishments around the world to discuss on a regional basis how to lower tensions, strengthen civil-military relations in developing nations, and address critical regional challenges."¹³ In 1993, the first center, the George C. Marshall European Center for

Security Studies, located in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany was established,¹⁴ and soon after, Hawaii Senator Daniel Inouye proposed a second center that would focus on the security challenges found in the Asia-Pacific region.¹⁵ On 29 January 1996, the Secretary of Defense officially established the Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies under Department of Defense Directive 5200.38.¹⁶ APCSS complemented the U.S. Pacific Command security cooperation program with an original mission to enhance Asia-Pacific security cooperation. The center conducted its first executive level course in September of 1996. The 12 week course included 23 international fellows who represented 12 countries from across the region.¹⁷ While the program has continued to mature through the years, the mission has varied only slightly from the original vision to increase security cooperation through mutual understanding and informed dialogue.

Mission to Build Security Capacity through Cooperation

Today the mission statement of APCSS embodies a strategic focus and fresh approach for addressing the complex security environment within the Asia-Pacific region. The mission of the center was recently polished and further articulated by the center's current director, LTG (R) Ed Smith, as "building capacities and communities of interest by educating, connecting, and empowering security practitioners to advance Asia-Pacific security."¹⁸ The vision to accomplish this mission is rooted in an innovative international executive education program coupled with an emphasis on leader/organizational development to advance multinational security cooperation and capacity building.¹⁹ The center's methodology fosters increased cooperation through the creation of an educational environment that advances regional knowledge,

develops leader skills, and emphasizes the need to establish and maintain lasting personal relationships amongst security practitioners, thereby promoting multilateralism to facilitate the development of new security capacity.

The success of the center's programs is the result of a unique transformational learning environment, in which participants, who often arrive with narrow perspectives, are encouraged to engage in genuine conversations with culturally diverse and capable international fellows, and leave with heightened awareness and appreciation of other regional perspectives and a shared understanding of the region's interests and concerns. APCSS stresses three enduring principles in every aspect of the program: transparency, mutual respect and non-attribution. These principles are essential to creating an environment that encourages authentic dialogue and facilitates deeper learning through the sharing of vast and diverse experiences and perspectives of international fellows.

Transformational Learning Experience

APCSS's transformational learning environment can be attributed to a learning model which is a synthesis of constructivist learning and executive education principles. The strengths of this model are best articulated with a quote by Major General J. F. C. Fuller, which is often used in course introductions at APCSS:

“We shall teach each other: first, because we have a vast amount of experience behind us, and secondly, in my opinion, it is only through free criticism of each other's ideas that truth can be thrashed out ...During your course here no one is going to compel you to work, for the simple reason that a man who requires to be driven is not worth the driving...thus you will become your own

students and until you learn how to teach yourselves, you will never be taught by others.”²⁰

Described as a practitioner-focused, activity-based, and technology-enabled learning model, one of the primary strengths of APCSS’s programs is its flexibility, which allows for a focus on participants, and adjustments in course curriculum and content in order to adequately address the educational needs of participants of diverse cultures, goals, interests and abilities. A further strength of the program is the nature of course participation. Through a combination of presentation formats such as plenary lectures, panel presentations, and activity-based learning experiences such as case studies and small group seminars, fellows are able to increase their awareness of the region’s security challenges as well as learn from the personal experiences of one another. This environment of active participation creates opportunities to address the broad concerns of the strategic Asia-Pacific security setting, while simultaneously allowing the fellows to experiment with individual and organizational leadership skills, and build professional life-long relationships that can be further developed through established APCSS country alumni groups and functionally aligned communities of interest.

APCSS Security Curriculum

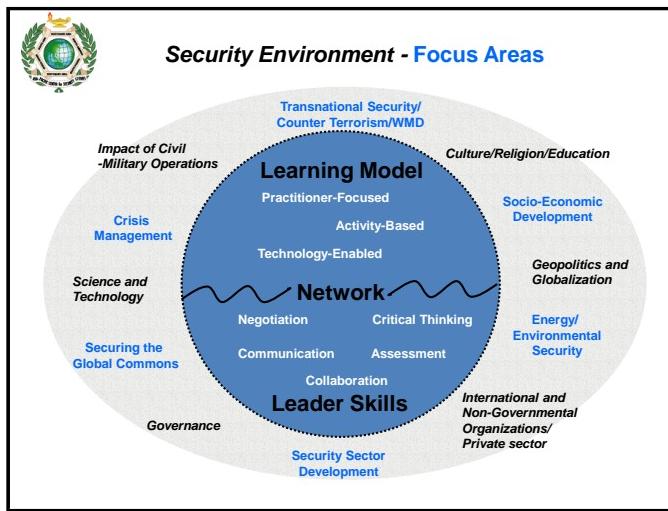


Figure 1: Security Environment/Focus Areas application to the APCSS learning model.²¹

The APCSS curriculum reflects an emphasis on a manageable number of significant securities-related focus areas, as depicted in figure 1, and APCSS's objective to increase knowledge and awareness of the transnational challenges as they relate to the region as a whole. The focus areas are informed by policy direction from the Office of the Secretary of Defense – Policy (OSD (P)), USPACOM and through needs assessments of the APCSS leadership, based on frequent interaction with center's vast alumni network during periodic engagement visits into the region.

Resident courses conducted at APCCS have remained fairly constant over the last five years and are the foremost vehicle, within the center's programs, to advance overall security cooperation. The center has four international courses which utilize critical thinking skills as the basis to better understand the complex transnational security environment: Advanced Security Cooperation (ASC), Transnational Security Cooperation (TSC), Comprehensive Crisis Management (CCM), and Comprehensive Security Response to Terrorism (CSRT). The Advanced Security Cooperation (ASC)

course, the center's flagship course, is designed to deepen knowledge, advance critical thinking skills, and promote the construction of networks related to multilateral security cooperation in the Asia-Pacific Region among mid-career security practitioners representing national government agencies and other influential regional organizations.²² The Transnational Security Cooperation (TSC) course is a one week course that promotes security cooperation among senior practitioners (flag officer or civilian equivalent) representing national government agencies and other influential regional organizations.²³ TSC and ASC represent a broad strategic curriculum which is structured around regional security concerns while the two remaining international courses address specific transnational security challenges. The Comprehensive Crisis Management (CCM) course is a four week course that provides a focused venue for mid-level practitioners to explore strategies and procedures to effectively prepare, respond, and recover from strategic level crisis.²⁴ The Comprehensive Security Response to Terrorism (CSRT) course provides security practitioners in the Asia-Pacific region the operational and strategic-level skills necessary to enhance their ability to understand and combat terrorism and transnational security threats.²⁵

The APCSS curriculum emphasizes the utility of cooperative frameworks such as multilateral organizations and a comprehensive approach to effectively address the transnational security challenges found within the Asia-Pacific region. In alignment with the unique practitioner-focused learning model, most courses include a self-paced “fellows project” to allow each individual to focus on an identified security challenge within his or her organization or country. Through the application of critical thinking tools introduced in the courses, fellows develop action plans that can be further refined

and implemented upon course completion and their return home. This practitioner-based project facilitates the application of academic knowledge, and empowers fellows to create actionable plans which can subsequently lead to increased capacity within their own nation's security sector.

The center also advances security sector development through an offering of very specific topical workshops and outreach programs (in-resident /in-region). These programs are tailored to specific needs of individual countries or scoped to address suitable security focus areas identified by OSD (P), USPACOM or by the center's leadership. Both the workshops and outreach programs at APCSS attract a more senior audience representing institutions from across the security sector. The participants represent the "whole of government" and include civil servants from a variety of ministries, national level politicians, non-government organizations and traditional security organizations such as police and military. The outreach program leverages many of the APCSS foundational learning model principles embodied by the resident courses as a means to establish a neutral space where learning, dialogue and cooperation can flourish. The outreach program has become a pillar within the APCSS educational experience and is critical to providing the center a capability to address issues better accomplished out in the region. The outreach program provides additional value by providing a capability to attract participants that may not be able to attend an APCSS resident program, and by creating a forum to connect APCSS faculty members to key audiences throughout the Asia-Pacific region.²⁶

Program Assessment through Indicators of Achievement

Understanding and assessing whether participation in APCSS programs results in concrete and measureable security capacity changes is a challenging undertaking. With any “soft power” framework the ability to see quantifiable application can be difficult to measure, especially in the short-term. It can be argued that future achievements and actions of APCSS alumni are the only true measures of whether the programs are effective. Still, the APCSS courses and programs employ a rigorous set of quantitative and qualitative surveying techniques both during and after a program or course, in an attempt to measure program effectiveness. Surveys gather information about satisfaction related to the APCSS experience, and offer participants an avenue to provide input on course content and delivery. Additionally, fellows are interviewed by faculty and assessment specialists at the conclusion of every course in order to identify measures of effectiveness and success within the APCSS programs.

Indicators of achievement for all APCSS programs and courses are based on the Kirkpatrick Model for Evaluating Training Programs.²⁷ The Kirkpatrick four-level approach has been modified slightly to account for the educational nature of the APCSS program. Figure 2 is an example of associated measures for a typical APCSS program depicting the standardized benchmarks to better assess levels of achievement.

Kirkpatrick Level 1 – Participant Reaction to Program, Courses and Activities
<i>APCSS Measurement: Accomplished through individual surveys.</i>
1. Degree to which Program/Course/Activity met fellow's expectations
2. Value a fellow places on Program/Course/Activity
3. Planned actions – Tell others about the Program/Course/Activity?
Kirkpatrick Level 2 – Learning: Were Program/Course/Activity objectives met?
<i>APCSS Measurement: Accomplished through individual surveys personal interviews.</i>
1. Difference in Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSA) before and after Program/Course/Activity.
2. Degree to which the ability to effectively network with regional counterparts was improved by Program/Course/Activity.
3. Degree to which level of influence was enhanced by Program/Course/Activity.
Kirkpatrick Level 3 – Behavior: Prior participants contributing to positive change
<i>APCSS Measurement: Accomplished through alumni testimonials and post program alumni engagement.</i>
1. Continued networking and exchange of information between participants on issues discussed.
2. Visible demand for participation in potential follow-on events in the region.
3. Post-Program/Course/Activity events involving alumni.
Kirkpatrick Level 4 – Results: Contributing to Regional Security and Capacity Building
<i>APCSS Measurement: Accomplished through APCSS leadership regional engagement opportunities</i>
1. Description and impact of results attributable to independent alumni actions/efforts.
2. Description and impact of results attributable to cooperative action among alumni independent of APCSS.

Figure 2: Kirkpatrick Model applied to Evaluate APCSS Programs²⁸

Other means used by the center to assess its utility and success in further developing the security sector are active polling/interaction of alumni and by capturing alumni testimonials during/post APCSS program events. Collecting comments from graduates of APCSS programs provides insight into the depth of understanding of course material, the likelihood they will use the acquired skills within their profession, and whether they have established lasting personal connections, all measures of success of APCSS programs. Many of these testimonials demonstrate the center is capable of consistently achieving Kirkpatrick Level 3 outcomes. The remarks

demonstrate a direct connection between the unique educational environments created at APCSS and an ability to move learning to action.

"What impressed me most is that the (APCSS) program is designed to promote consensus in dealing with crisis among peoples with different nationalities and cultural backgrounds, which, as a result, has bettered my understanding of people who came from the neighboring countries. All of the above-mentioned factors relating to the program have enhanced both my knowledge and capability in dealing with crisis. After being back to Shanghai, China, I submitted to the municipal government a report on how to identify and handle crisis in an increasingly globalized metropolitan city like Shanghai. The report was based on my experience at APCSS."²⁹

Dr. Chengzhi Wang, Institute of Asia and Pacific Studies, Peoples Republic of China, Comprehensive Crisis Management Course, March 2010

Maintaining Connections beyond APCSS

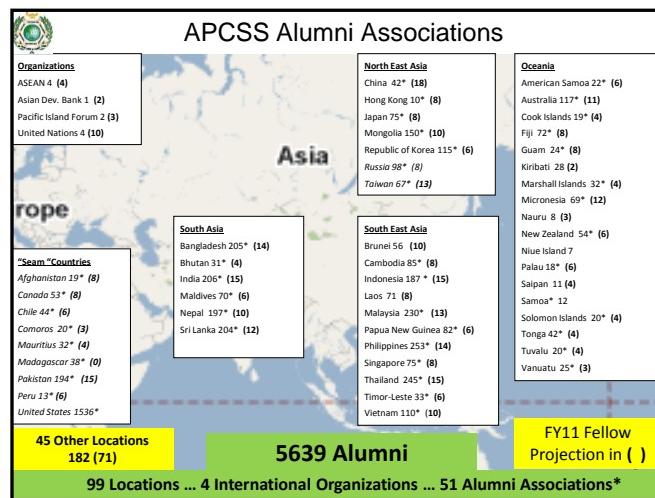


Figure 3: APCSS Alumni Network and Associations.³⁰

A final key to the success of APCSS programs is an emphasis on maintaining the connections made during APCSS experiences, through organized alumni networks. The APCSS alumni program provides a means to continue the educational experience, foster further security cooperation amongst APCSS participating countries and a mechanism to connect alumni from across the region through active security-based communities of interest. The alumni network has grown significantly over the past six years and today includes 51 alumni country or international organization based associations with over 5600 alumni representing the full breadth and depth of the Asia-Pacific security sector (Figure 3). This consummate association of alumni continues to actively engage with APCSS faculty through professional dialogue and interaction within communities of interest enabled by web based technology. These communities of interest are organized around the APCSS security focus areas (Figure 1) which include: Environmental Security, Maritime Security, Regional Security Cooperation Mechanisms, Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), Transnational (Non-State) Extremism, Health Security, and Disaster Management.³¹ These function-focused communities connect security practitioners from across the region by providing a means to further develop multinational strategies to comprehensively approach the transnational security challenges found within the region.

APCSS Unique Value Added

Through the analysis of APCSS program documents, course survey results and alumni testimonials, it can be concluded that the APCSS model is contributing to further security capacity throughout the Asia-Pacific region. The unique program characteristics, based on developing cooperation, trust and mutual understanding

among the participants, enables the center to achieve its mission to educate, empower and connect security practitioners across the Asia-Pacific region. The ability of the center to create a transformational learning experience through an emphasis on mutual respect, transparency, and non-attribution among the fellows enables the establishment of enduring relationships and better understanding of the security challenges through the shared personal vignettes of the fellows. The center also provides a unique capability to address the borderless nature of transnational security challenges through a network of alumni connected functionally through communities of interest, regardless of their country of origin. Finally, the breadth of APCSS resident courses, workshops and regional outreach programs provides an ability to turn an academic experience into actionable plans and programs capable of enhancing security capacity throughout the region.

III. Multinational Planning Augmentation Team (MPAT)

The Multinational Planning Augmentation Team (MPAT) is a visionary program born from discussions during the third annual Chief's of Defense (CHODS) conference held in November of 2000. The USPACOM Commander, Admiral Dennis Blair, along with the chiefs of defense from across the region, envisioned a capability to effectively conduct planning and operations as a multinational force. Admiral Blair stated, "Our nations have a consistent set of security challenges organized around homelands, nearby areas, and the region. While actual operating arrangements may range from UN Operations, to pitching in to assist in Disaster Relief, to cooperating to meet

transnational threats, we (CHODS) agree that in any situation we need multipurpose, interoperable forces capable of the full range of military operations.”³² Admiral Blair set out to create this multinational force capable of mobilizing to provide needed unified action during times of crisis. While an initiative to create a coalition force was not completely original, Admiral Blair’s intent to establish the capability long before a crisis or military need, through a program relying heavily on cooperation and common understanding amongst the participating countries, was indeed visionary.

MPAT was initially established as an operational level program designed “to facilitate the rapid and effective establishment and or augmentation of multinational coalition or combined task force headquarters.”³³ Since its inception, the MPAT program has grown rapidly over a short ten-year period and now includes over 30 participating countries from across the Asia-Pacific region. The program has created a robust cadre of multinational planners, both military, civilian and NGO, capable of operating together to address nonstandard security concerns such as Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Response (HADR). The MPAT program is enabled through relatively minimal USPACOM resources. The actual organization is structured upon a cooperative framework which brings together the participating member nations from across the region. A small secretariat of approximately six USPACOM personnel provides the needed planning, administrative support and resourcing to conduct the annual MPAT events which include workshops, exercises and support to other regional security forums. These MPAT events revolve around the collaborative development of a Multinational Force Standing Operating Procedures (MNF SOP), and the associated exercises designed to validate the SOP.

Multinational Force Standing Operating Procedures (MNF SOP)

The MNF SOP is primarily focused on the operational level of military planning with a desire to standardize procedures between multinational forces focusing on nontraditional military operations.³⁴ The MNF SOP vision is to increase cooperation and collaboration both before and during crisis response, to promote interoperability and decreased mission response times during a crisis. The MNF SOP belongs to all interested and participating countries, rather than to a single nation, and represents the contributions of all participating countries, with an agreed upon set of doctrine, military terminology, processes and shared lessons. This nonbinding document is not a formal agreement between the countries but rather a point of departure to be used during a crisis within the region. Furthermore, the SOP is a living document which is refined and improved upon annually by the 33 MPAT participating nations. To date, the MPAT program has conducted 14 MNF SOP workshops, sponsored by USPACOM and hosted by nations throughout the Asia-Pacific region on a rotating basis. The official unclassified document (MNF SOP VER2.6) is available on line (<http://www.mpat.org>) with unlimited distribution for use by any nation.³⁵ The modular organizational structure of the SOP allows it to be utilized for a very specific functional requirement, such as the interoperability issues when planning for multinational HADR operations, or in a very broad application when establishing a functioning multinational force headquarters. The MNF SOP has been incorporated into United States joint doctrine, Joint Publication 3-16, Multinational Operations, and is recognized as a foundational approach to establishing interoperability procedures between multiple nations while simultaneously preserving their national sovereignty.³⁶ The document relies heavily on a cooperative

and collaborative environment amongst all nations, through its continuous refinement process of biannual workshops. The SOP, in itself, is an important tool to enhance multinational interoperability, but the process through which this SOP has been established and subsequently improved upon is where true common understanding, increased confidence and trust between the participating countries within the MPAT program can be found.

Multinational Cadre Development through SOP Validation

Admiral Blair's original vision for MPAT was to develop a cadre of multinational planners who regularly practiced working together before crisis. During a speech to the 2011 Pacific Symposium Admiral Blair stated, "Procedures are of little use if staff officers have no training on how to use them."³⁷ This guidance established a regimen of activities that begin with the development and refinement of and training with the MNF SOP, during SOP workshops, and conclude with periodic exercises to socialize, validate, and further train the cadre of multinational planners on the procedures outlined in the SOP. The MPAT exercises are typically scenario-driven, tabletop exercises, conducted biannually, with a primary focus on validating the MNF SOP as well as training the cadre of multinational planners on the procedures outlined within the SOP. The exercise themes are tailored to the needs of the participating countries or designed around concepts that will validate a recently refined or developed portion of the MNF SOP. The frequency of the exercises assists in developing habitual and personal relationships among the cadre of planners. Just as the SOP workshop requires cooperation and collaboration in the development process, this same spirit of cooperation is the glue that binds the multinational cadre. Thus, the true value of the

MPAT program can be found in the lasting personal relationships, which enable common understanding and the mutual trust required to operate seamlessly as a multinational force.

MPAT Program Measures of Effectiveness

Following validation of the MNF SOP, conducted through MPAT directed exercises the cadre of multinational planners participates within COBRA GOLD, a larger USPACOM Transnational Security Cooperation exercise. The COBRA GOLD series of exercises are held annually in Thailand, and test the ability of a US joint task force capable headquarters to function with a Royal Thai Army Corps. The MNF SOP provides the primary procedures for the command post while the MPAT cadre of multinational planners provides the leadership and manning.³⁸ The event provides a realistic assessment of the interoperability of both the MNF SOP and the associated planners to perform within a robust multinational exercise environment. This is the final test of the SOP, and has proven extremely useful in informing future training requirements as well as SOP refinement. The COBRA GOLD exercise also serves as another venue for convening the MPAT cadre of participants, and continues the development of common experiences that solidify the relationships required to operate in a multinational environment.

During the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami, the international disaster-relief operations following this catastrophe were initially enabled by a trained MPAT cadre, who used procedures derived from the MNF SOP to provide a timely and unified multinational response.³⁹ Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz credited

the MPAT model for its significant contribution to the efficient establishment of a multinational capability that provided relief throughout the region affected by the tsunami. Dr. Wolfowitz stated that “USPACOM has a program known as the Multinational Planning Augmentation Team (MPAT) to create not a standing response force, but a cadre of individuals who are accustomed to working together on a multinational basis to respond to crises. MPAT experience was put to good use in the response to the tsunami crisis.”⁴⁰ Effective utilization of the MPAT MNF SOP during exercises such as COBRA GOLD and the Indian Ocean tsunami crisis response, demonstrate the utility of the MPAT model, which develops a common set of multinational procedures and a trained cadre of multinational planners, and fosters an elevated sense of cooperation and collaboration, as well as increased security capacity for the nations in the Asia-Pacific region.

IV. APCSS and MPAT: Exemplars for Addressing Transnational Security

With the current challenges of terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, climate change, and waning valuable natural resources, it is clear that transnational security must be a priority; and creating enduring comprehensive security solutions to these challenges requires cooperation and security capacity building with partner nations. At the 2001 Pacific Symposium, Admiral Dennis C. Blair stated, “By working together, we improve the readiness of regional forces for effective multilateral operations and develop habits of cooperation and a shared sense of responsibility for regional security. The trust and confidence resulting from habits of cooperation contributes directly to sharing dependable expectations of peaceful change.”⁴¹

This study revealed that the Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies (APCSS) and the Multinational Planning Augmentation Team (MPAT) epitomize these “habits of cooperation”, and have resulted in trust- and confidence-building in the Asia- Pacific region, and, therefore, improved readiness of regional forces for multilateral operations and advanced security capacity in the Asia-Pacific region. The documentation of intersecting strengths within these two military frameworks has revealed three primary best practices: 1) the establishment of networks for security practitioners throughout the region, 2) the facilitation of actionable plans and programs derived from dialogue and academic learning, and 3) the creation of a spirit of cooperation and collaboration amongst regional nations.

By creating environments in which shared experiences are paramount, APCSS and MPAT have established lasting connections amongst security practitioners across the Asia-Pacific region, creating a viable network that fosters increased cooperation and collaboration across the entire security sector. Built upon guiding principles of trust, mutual respect, common understanding, and transparency, the security communities that have been established by these programs remain strong, and the participants of these programs remain connected and actively engaged to further promote enhanced security for the region.

Additionally, the two frameworks embody the essence of cooperation and collaboration, through the emphasis on the participant’s needs and ownership. The APCSS’s principle of “participant-focused” and MPAT’s facilitation of a collective MNF SOP are exemplars for the development of a shared space for learning and

collaboration. These outward and genuine emphases on participants are the starting point for all strategies to enhance security cooperation within the region.

Finally, another pillar of these programs is the aim to move learning and dialogue into action. APCSS has been successful in this area through security related projects selected by the participants based on their countries' or organizations' security requirements. The MPAT model, which uses periodic workshops to refine the MNF SOP based on emerging security concerns, continues to advance and update the relevant SOP. Both of these efforts bridge the gap between theory and practice and provide participants with experience in applying newly gained knowledge with real world and relevant issues of security.

The APCSS and MPAT frameworks continue to evolve to meet the needs of the dynamic security environment within the region and will continue to provide insights into effective models to promote cooperation amongst nations. Without a doubt, they should serve to advise other emerging regional programs that endeavor to strengthen alliances, build partnerships, and enhance the security capacity of multilateral organizations within the region.

ENDNOTES

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